

## TARANAKI.

Sir,—

Education Office, New Plymouth, 31st March, 1911.

We have the honour to submit our annual report for the year ending the 31st December, 1910.

At the beginning of the year ninety-three schools (including four half-time schools) were in operation, and during the year new schools were established at Oeo, Kotare, and Taurakawa.

The following table contains a summary of the examination results:—

Classes.					Number on Roll.	Present at the Annual Examination.	Average Age of Pupils in each Class.
							Yrs. mos.
Standard VII	...	...	...	...	125	120	15 3
" VI	...	...	...	...	336	319	14 0
" V	...	...	...	...	491	475	13 4
" IV	...	...	...	...	629	609	12 5
" III	...	...	...	...	670	654	11 6
" II	...	...	...	...	706	694	10 1
" I	...	...	...	...	752	722	9 4
Preparatory	...	...	...	...	2,358	2,192	7 1
Totals	...	...	...	...	6,067	5,785	11 8*

\* Mean of average age.

Compared with the return for 1908, the roll-number shows an increase of 261, while the increase in the number present at the Inspector's annual visit was 290.

There has been an increase in the roll-number of every standard except Standard III and Standard IV. In 1909 there was a slight decrease in Standard VII, but we are pleased to record an increase for this year of nineteen. Of the 125 pupils in Standard VII, 101 belong to the secondary classes of the Stratford District High School.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.**—The Catholic schools in New Plymouth, Inglewood, Stratford, and Opunake still continue to do satisfactory work.

The following is a summary of examination-results for each of the Catholic schools examined and inspected by us [table not reprinted].

## THE PRIMER CLASSES.

**SIGHT-READING.**—The practice of reading and rereading the school primers beyond the limit which separates necessary from wasteful repetition still prevails in many schools. In every school three or four sets of supplementary Readers should be kept, and a definite time set aside on the time-table for sight-reading, when these special reading-books might be used.

It must be manifest that a considerable benefit would be derived from this use of supplementary Readers in the direction of giving a greater facility in the mechanical part of reading and also in stimulating the child's love for interesting books.

Another gain will be that this additional reading will considerably enlarge the child's vocabulary, which will tend not only to create within the child the power to express itself with confidence on certain topics, but to so widen and enrich his experience that he will feel that he must speak. In this way one of the great difficulties of oral composition in the lower classes will be partly overcome.

**INDIVIDUAL WORK.**—There is a tendency in the infant department to minimize individual work. The answering is too often simultaneous. Not infrequently does it happen that teachers not only of the preparatory classes but also of the standards (being misled by the deceptive nature of the collective answering common in their classes) overestimate the general proficiency of their pupils' work. Each child as far as possible should feel that during any lesson he may be called upon at any moment to do some individual work.

Then, again, the answers should be clearly and definitely given, and pupils should not be allowed to answer out of turn and give unasked the answer *sotto voce*.

**KILL-TIME WORK.**—There is one phase of work done in the infant department that calls for strong condemnation. Not an inconsiderable amount of the slate work done by P1 and even P2, while the teacher is engaged with another class, is so indifferently supervised, so perfunctorily corrected, and so unsuitable to the stage of progress that the pupils are at what has been aptly termed "kill-time work."

**PHYSICAL TRAINING.**—This branch of instruction continues to receive a satisfactory amount of attention, and at least two of its objects—namely, the raising of the general standard of health and the making of the children alert and responsive—are kept fairly well in view. In a few schools, however, the exercises seem to be somewhat aimless in character and execution. Careful attention should be given to the physiological effect of each exercise. It is very easy to slip into a perfunctory manner of going through a number of exercises; this is particularly the case with those exercises which are framed with the object of increasing the breathing-capacity.

Unfortunately, one of the aims of physical instruction is almost entirely overlooked. Rarely do we see exercises specially given with the object of improving the carriage of the body and of imparting grace and ease to the pupils' general deportment.